CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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LETTER DATED 28 MAY 1998 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF COLOMBIA ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT TRANSMITTING THE SECTION ENTITLED "DISARMAMENT AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY" FROM THE FINAL COMMUNIQUE OF THE MINISTERIAL MEETING OF THE COORDINATING BUREAU OF THE MOVEMENT OF NON-ALIGNED COUNTRIES, HELD IN CARTAGENA DE INDIAS ON 19 AND 20 MAY 1998

I attach the section entitled "Disarmament and international security" from the final communiqué of the Ministerial Meeting of the Coordinating Bureau of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, held in Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, on 19 and 20 May this year. Please distribute it as an official document of the Conference on Disarmament.

(Signed) Gustavo Castro Guerrero
Ambassador
Head of Mission

GE.98-63206 (E)

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MINISTERIAL MEETING OF THE COORDINATING BUREAU OF THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT.

Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, 19-20 May, 1998

DISARMAMENT AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

101. The Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Heads of Delegation reiterated that with the end of the cold war, there is no justification for the maintenance of nuclear arsenals, or concepts of international security based on promoting and developing military alliances and policies of nuclear deterrence. They noted and welcomed the various international initiatives which stress that with the end of the cold war the opportunity now exists for the international community to pursue nuclear disarmament as a matter of the highest priority. They also noted that the present situation whereby nuclear-weapon states insist that nuclear weapons provide unique security benefits, and yet monopolise the right to own them, is highly discriminatory, unstable and cannot be sustained. These weapons continued to represent a threat to the survival of the mankind. They recalled that the Cartagena Summit had called for the adoption of an action plan for the elimination of nuclear weapons within a time-bound framework. They once again called upon the international community to join them in negotiating and implementing universal, non discriminatory disarmament measures and mutually agreed confidence-building measures.

102. The Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Heads of Delegation reiterated their call on the Conference on Disarmament to establish, as the highest priority, an ad hoc committee to start in 1998 negotiations on a phased programme for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons with a specified framework of time, including a Nuclear Weapons Convention. The Conference on Disarmament shall take into consideration all relevant views and proposals, regarding this issue, that have been submitted to it. They also insisted on the need to conclude a universal and legally binding multilateral agreement committing all States to the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. In this context they regretted that some nuclear weapons states had adopted inflexible postures which prevented the Conference on Disarmament from commencing these negotiations.

103. In this connection, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Heads of Delegation reiterated that a number of Non-Aligned Movement countries had taken collective initiatives at the United Nations General Assembly sessions to underscore the need for urgent action in the field of nuclear disarmament, as mandated by the Cartagena Summit. They recognised all of the useful proposals put forward by members of Non-Aligned Movement in the Conference on Disarmament on the establishment of an Ad Hoc Committee on nuclear disarmament including the useful work done by Non-Aligned Movement members of the Conference on Disarmament in developing a Program of Action for the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons within a time-bound framework.

104. The Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Heads of Delegation expressed concern over the failure of nuclear weapon States to demonstrate a genuine commitment with regard to complete nuclear disarmament, and to provide universal, unconditional and legally binding negative security assurances to all non-nuclear weapon States, and urged the nuclear weapon States to immediately commence and conclude without delay negotiations on these assurances.

105. The Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Heads of Delegation noted the establishment of an Ad Hoc Committee on Effective international arrangement to assure non-nuclear weapons States against the use or the threat of use of nuclear weapons in the Conference on Disarmament to negotiate universal, unconditional and legally binding assurances to all non-nuclear weapon States.

106. The Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Heads of Delegation reiterated the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice that "There exists an obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control". In this connection, they reiterated their call upon all the States to immediately fulfil that obligation by commencing multilateral negotiations leading to an early conclusion of a nuclear weapons convention prohibiting the development, production, testing, deployment, stockpiling, transfer, threat or use of threat of nuclear weapons and providing for their elimination.

107. The Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Heads of Delegations noted with concern that undue restrictions on export to developing countries of material, equipment and technology, for peaceful purposes persist. They emphasised that proliferation concerns should be addressed through multilaterally negotiated, universal, comprehensive and non-discriminatory agreements. Non-proliferation control arrangements should be transparent and open to participation by all States and should ensure that they do not impose restrictions on access to material, equipment and technology for peaceful purposes required by developing countries for their continued development. In this regard they also expressed their strong rejection of attempts by any member States to use the International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) technical co-operation as a tool for political purposes in violation of the IAEA's Statute.

108. Consistent with the decisions taken by the 1995 Review and Extension Conference, of Parties to the Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Heads of Delegation of States parties to the NPT called upon all States, particularly the nuclear weapon States, to fulfil their commitments, particularly those related to Article VI of the Treaty. They also emphasised the need to ensure and facilitate the exercise of the inalienable right of all States to develop, produce and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination under IAEA safeguards. Undertakings to facilitate participation in the fullest possible exchange of equipment, material and scientific and technological information for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy should be fully implemented.

109. The Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Heads of Delegation of States parties to the NPT took note with regret at the outcome of the deliberations of the Second Preparatory Committee held in Geneva from 27 April to 8 May, 1998. They further regretted that the Committee could not achieve a substantive result due to the insistence of one delegation to support the nuclear policies of a non party to the NPT. They called upon the Preparatory Committees up to and including the 2000 Review Conference of the NPT to engage immediately in substantive work for the meaningful implementation of the obligations under the Treaty and the commitments in the 1995 Principles and Objectives document, and the resolutions on Middle East. They further called upon the Preparatory Committee to make specific time available at its future sessions to deliberate on the practical steps for systematic and progressive efforts to eliminate nuclear weapons, and for the 2000 NPT Review Conference to establish a subsidiary body to its Main Committee to deliberate on the practical steps for systematic and progressive efforts to eliminate nuclear weapons.

110. The Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Heads of Delegation reaffirmed the inviolability of peaceful nuclear activities and that any attack or threat of attack against peaceful nuclear facilities - operational or under construction - poses a great danger to human beings and the environment, and constitutes a grave violation of international law, principles and purposes of the UN Charter and regulations of the IAEA. They recognised the need for a comprehensive multilaterally negotiated instrument, prohibiting attacks, or threat of attacks on nuclear facilities devoted to peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

111. The Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Heads of Delegation of the States parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention welcomed the increasing number of ratifications of the Convention and invited the declared possessors of chemical weapons and other States who have still not ratified it to do so as soon as possible with the view to its universality. They also underlined the urgency of satisfactorily resolving the unresolved issues in the framework of the Organisation of the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) with a view to paving the ground for the effective, full and non-discriminatory implementation of the Convention. In this context, they reiterated their call on the developed countries to promote international co-operation through the transfer of technology, material and equipment for peaceful purposes in the chemical field and the removal of all and any discriminatory restrictions that are contrary to the letter and spirit of the Convention.

112. While asserting that the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention inherently precludes the use of biological weapons, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Heads of Delegation reiterated the decision by the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention Review Conference that the use by the States parties, in any way and under any circumstances, of microbial or other biological agents or toxins, that is not consistent with prophylactic, protective or other peaceful purposes, is effectively a violation of Article I of the Convention. In this connection they noted that the Islamic Republic of Iran has formally presented a proposal to amend Article I of the Convention to include the prohibition of use of biological weapons and urged an early reply from the States parties to the inquiries by the depositories on this proposal. The Ministers noted the progress achieved so far negotiating a Protocol to strengthen the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention and reaffirmed the decision of the Fourth Review Conference urging the conclusion of the negotiations by the Ad Hoc group as soon as possible before the commencement of the Fifth Review Conference and for it to submit its report, which shall be adopted by consensus, to the States parties, to be considered at a Special Conference. Therefore, artificial deadlines should be avoided. They also expressed their concern at any attempts to reduce the scope and importance of issues related to Article X of the Convention. Ensured access for peaceful purposes to the relevant materials, equipment and technology is essential to safeguard the economic interests of developing countries. Substantive progress in strengthening the application and full operationalisation of Article X is thus crucial for the conclusion of a universally acceptable and legally binding instrument designed to strengthen the Convention.

113. The Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Heads of Delegation expressed particular concern over the illicit transfer and circulation of small arms and light weapons and their accumulation and proliferation in many countries, which constituted a serious threat to the population and to national and regional security and were a factor contributing to the destabilisation of States. They urged States to take steps to deal effectively, through administrative and legislative means, with the increasing problem of illicit transfer of small arms and light weapons which exacerbate tensions leading to strife, conflict and terrorism, and impact negatively on the socio-economic development of affected countries. In this regard, they welcomed the adoption of guidelines in 1996 for international arms transfers in the context of General Assembly resolution 46/36H of 6 September 1991 by the United Nations Disarmament Commission. Moreover, they welcomed the initiative by His Excellency Alpha Oumar Konare, President of

the Republic of Mali, on the establishment of a moratorium on the production, transfer and illicit traffic of light arms in West Africa, adopted by member States of ECOWAS within the framework of on-going discussions and referring to the creation of a mechanism to prevent, handle and rule on conflicts in the sub-region.

114. The Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Heads of Delegation stressed the importance of transparency in armaments, in view of the dangerous consequences to the international peace and security that the development, production and stockpiling of weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons, and the excessive production of conventional arms have. They encouraged States, taking into account the legitimate requirement of States for self-defence and the specific characteristics of each region, to consider appropriate initiatives at multilateral, regional and national levels to promote transparency in armaments as an important element for building confidence and security.

115. The Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Heads of Delegation noted the opening for signature in Ottawa during December 1997 of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction. They emphasised that elimination of landmines should take into account the legitimate national security concern of States as well as their legitimate rights to use appropriate measures for self-defence.

116. The Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Heads of Delegation called on States to become parties to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May be Deemed to be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects (CCW) and the Protocols thereto, and called upon States parties to the CCW to express their consent to be bound to its Amended Protocol II on Landmines and Protocol IV on Blinding Laser Weapons with a view to their entry into force as soon as possible.

117. The Ministers of Foreign Affairs and the Heads of Delegation called upon the international community to provide the necessary assistance to landmine clearance operations as well as to the rehabilitation of the victims in the landmine affected countries. They further called for international assistance to ensure full access of affected countries to material, equipment, technology and financial resources for mine clearance. The Ministers also called for continued humanitarian assistance for victims of landmines.

118. The Ministers of Foreign Affairs and the Heads of Delegation expressed concern about the residue of the Second World War, particularly in the form of landmines which cause human and material damage and obstruct development plans in some Non-Aligned countries. They called on the States responsible for laying the mines outside their territories to assume responsibility for the landmines, to cooperate with the affected countries, to provide the necessary information, maps and technical assistance for their clearance, to contribute towards defrayal of the costs of clearance and provide compensation for any ensuing losses.

119. The Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Heads of Delegation considered the establishment of Nuclear Weapons Free Zones (NWFZs) as a positive step towards attaining the objective of global nuclear disarmament. They urged States to conclude agreements with a view to creating nuclear-weapon-free zones in regions where they do not exist, in accordance with the provisions of the Final Document of SSOD-1. In this context, they welcomed the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones established by the Treaties of Tlatelolco, Rarotonga, Bangkok and Pelindaba. The Ministers and Heads of Delegation considered the question of the establishment of Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones in other parts of the world and agreed that this should be on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned and in conformity with the provisions of the Final Document of SSOD-1. The

Ministers welcomed the efforts of Mongolia to institutionalise its status as a single State nuclear-weapon-free zone.

120. The Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Heads of Delegation reiterated their support for the establishment in the Middle East of a zone free of all weapons of mass destruction. To this end, they reaffirmed the need for the speedy establishment of a nuclear-weapons-free zone in the Middle East in accordance with Security Council resolutions 487 (1981) and 687 (1991) and the relevant General Assembly resolutions adopted by consensus. They called upon all parties concerned to take urgent and practical steps towards the establishment of such a zone and, pending its establishment, they called on Israel, the only country in the region that has not joined the NPT nor declared its intention to do so, to renounce possession of nuclear weapons, to accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) without delay, and to place promptly all its nuclear facilities under full-scope IAEA safeguards. They expressed great concern over the acquisition of nuclear capability by Israel which poses a serious and continuing threat to the security of neighbouring and other States and they condemned Israel for continuing to develop and stockpile nuclear arsenals. They are of the view that stability cannot be achieved in a region where massive imbalances in military capabilities are maintained particularly through the possession of nuclear weapons which allow one party to threaten its neighbours and the region. They further welcomed the initiative by H.E. Mohammed Hosni Mubarak, President of the Arab Republic of Egypt, on the establishment of a zone free from weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. They stressed that necessary steps should be taken in different international fora for the establishment of this zone. They also called for the total and complete prohibition of the transfer of all nuclear-related equipment, information, material and facilities, resources or devices and the extension of assistance in the nuclear-related scientific or technological fields to Israel.

121. The Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Heads of Delegation expressed their concern over the Israeli-Turkish military alliance as well as the naval manoeuvres carried out in the eastern part of the Mediterranean and the dangers that such manoeuvres pose to the security of the region.

122. The Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Heads of Delegation stated that in order to enhance international security and stability, all States parties to non-proliferation, arms limitations and disarmament treaties should comply with and implement all provisions of such treaties. They emphasised that questions of non-compliance by States Parties should be resolved in a manner consistent with such treaties. They further emphasised that any deviation from the role envisaged for the Security Council under the United Nations Charter or in certain circumstances under relevant provisions of multilateral treaties on non-proliferation, arms limitation and disarmament would undermine the provisions of these treaties and conventions, including the inherent mechanisms for securing redress of violations of their provisions. Such deviations would also call into question the value of painstaking multilateral negotiations on disarmament and arms control treaties in the Conference on Disarmament. They underlined that circumventing or undermining the provisions of existing treaties will seriously prejudice the role of the Conference.

123. The Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Heads of Delegation reaffirmed that global and regional approaches to disarmament are complementary and could be pursued simultaneously. They urged States in various regions of the world to negotiate agreements to promote greater balance in conventional armaments and restraint in the production and acquisition of conventional arms and, where necessary, for their progressive and balanced reduction, with a view to enhancing international and regional peace and security. They stressed that the peaceful resolution of regional and inter-State disputes is essential for the creation of conditions which would enable States to divert their resources from armaments to economic growth and development. Regional disarmament initiatives, to be practical, needed to take into

account the special characteristics of each region and enhance the security of every State of the region concerned. The question of the accumulation of conventional weapons beyond the legitimate requirements of the States for self-defence should also be addressed, taking into account the special characteristics of each region.

124. The Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Heads of Delegation, took note of the relevant paragraphs of the United Nation General Assembly Resolutions 52/12 A & B on international peace, security and disarmament, and insisted on the need that its implementation respects fully the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-intervention on the internal affairs of States.

125. The Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Heads of Delegations acknowledged that under the reform process, it was decided to re-establish at the UN Secretariat the Department on Disarmament headed by an Under Secretary General from a Non-Aligned country. They stressed their hope that this will contribute to greater disarmament efforts towards achieving general and complete disarmament in conformity with priorities set out in SSOD I and relevant provisions of General Assembly resolution 52/220.

126. The Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Heads of Delegation expressed once again their support for the convening of the IV Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly Devoted to Disarmament. They welcomed the adoption by the General Assembly, by consensus, of the resolution on the Convening of the IV Special Session of the General Assembly Devoted to Disarmament. They took note of the deliberations on the matter held by the United Nations Disarmament Commission and instructed the Co-ordinating Bureau to entrust the Non-Aligned Movement Working Group on Disarmament with the task of pursuing further the holding of the IV Special Session and the related co-ordination during the preparatory process. In this context, they reaffirmed the need for SSOD IV to review and assess the implementation of SSOD I.

127. The Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Heads of Delegation welcomed the decision adopted by the General Assembly on maintaining and revitalising the three Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament in Nepal, Peru and Togo.

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